

# Project Starlight 'Business as Usual'

Facilitating continuous improvements in production efficiency all without compromising quality or service.

## Client overview

Lloyds TSB is one of the leading credit card providers in the UK and as such has a significant print requirement for its customer communications, with some 200,000 discrete items produced daily. In 2006 Aquilus was awarded the print contract for statements and letters following a competitive tender process.

## Project requirement

Aquilus was given an ambitious timeline of just six months to migrate the service from the existing supplier. In that time it had to build a robust solution capable not only of achieving the necessary 'business as usual' volumes but of facilitating continuous improvements in production efficiency all without compromising quality or service.

Aquilus needed to respond in the face of a highly complex scenario that demanded the very best in technical know-how, workflow planning and operational set-up. Key challenges included the design and build of a tailored IT solution, the accurate identification and enveloping of large numbers of variable inserts and the alignment of new stock control and reconciliation methods.

## Solution and delivery

'Project Starlight' was allocated a dedicated team, led by a senior project manager and combining expertise across the spectrum - change management, print consultancy, risk management, business process analysis, supply chain management, technical services and client relationships. Given the scale of the task, three work streams were created to focus on key areas:

- ③ **Technical** – The technical team liaised with IT, the incumbent supplier and Lloyds TSB Group Operations to develop and construct a bespoke IT infrastructure to support Starlight. At the same time, the team responded to the client's request for improved management information and enhanced stock control by rolling-out 'Jobshop', Aquilus's stock control system.
- ③ **Analysis** – To ensure that the Aquilus solution was comprehensive and 'fit for purpose', the analysis team made a thorough examination of current customer requirements as well as undertaking a wealth of 'what if' and risk planning. From this they were able to define detailed workflows to govern individual processes and to guide appropriate action in the event of the unexpected. This was absolutely fundamental to the success of the whole project given the risk of parties underestimating the true extent of the work involved
- ③ **Testing** – The testing team supervised Aquilus's own functional testing and oversaw the user acceptance testing to ensure nothing had been overlooked. End-to-end parallel testing was undertaken to guard against any impact on 'business as usual' work. To secure a smooth, final transition, the overnight implementation was similarly managed; checks were made throughout the night and extra contingency was built in via a 5-day roll-back agreement with the existing supplier.

## Case Study

### Key Benefits

Through Aquilus's intelligent, precise and thorough management of Project Starlight, the six month deadline was met and with the smoothest of transitions:

- ③ Projected annual savings of 20% on production costs
- ③ More proactive service management
- ③ Optimised stock management with automated control systems providing 'instant position' on levels and requirements
- ③ Enhanced print quality
- ③ Superior management information

### Essentials

Essential criteria for any financial services client:

- ③ Certainty of outcome
- ③ Certainty of delivery
- ③ Certainty of cost



The quality and thoroughness of the Aquilus solution is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the roll-back facility remained unused. With the migration successfully completed, Aquilus now provide a high level of customer service based on the regular provision of management information reports and a continual assessment of performance against agreed SLAs. There is special focus on events and incidents that deviate from the norm, and root cause analysis undertaken to understand what lessons can be learnt and what improvements can be implemented for the future. This approach, based on our Lean Sigma methodology, ensures not only continuous improvement but also the adoption of the 'one best way' as our operating norm.

## Benefits and returns

Through Aquilus's intelligent, precise and thorough management of Project Starlight, the six month deadline was met and with the smoothest of transitions. The following benefits have already started to be realised:

- Ⓞ Projected annual savings of 20% on production costs over the previous supplier
- Ⓞ More proactive service management, with on-going review of requirements, operations and incidents to refine methodologies and output
- Ⓞ Superior management information enabling the client to more readily and more accurately assess performance and monitor progress against SLAs
- Ⓞ Optimised stock management with automated control systems providing 'instant position' on levels and requirements
- Ⓞ Enhanced print quality with on-going evaluation of production techniques to secure continuous improvements

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Bernie Studds

## Client verdict

"This was a substantial change management programme and it would have been very easy to underestimate the planning and resources needed to pull it off. From the off Aquilus demonstrated a tremendous grasp of both the essentials and the subtleties, successfully bringing together a very complex network of people, processes and technologies. The skill and care that went into the preparation and implementation phases is similarly present now that we have moved to business as usual. They are commercially aware and operationally astute, demonstrating a real affinity for our business. We are confident that they will continue to invest in this relationship, drive forward standards and secure consistent returns.

Bernie Studds, Head of Business Partnerships, Consumer Banking Operations, Lloyds TSB

## About Aquilus

Aquilus is one of the UK's foremost suppliers of innovative document solutions from document consultancy through to mailing services. Our portfolio includes document design, black through to full colour printing, intelligent mail insertion and a variety of mail optimisation solutions. In addition we offer 'mail in' services covering document design, scanning, automated character recognition, capture and indexing.

